CALL TO ORDER

The regular monthly meeting of the Legislative Task Force Committee was held on Thursday, September 19, 2013, and called to order by Chairperson Falkenberg at 12:07 p.m. in the Board Room, Room M210, at the Downtown Milwaukee Campus of Milwaukee Area Technical College.

A. ROLL CALL:

Members Present:

Lauren Baker, Jason Bauknecht, Ellis Bromberg, Charles Bruders, Tim Elverman, Janice Falkenberg, Camille Nicholai, Michael Rosen and Marwill Santiago

Members Absent:

Michael Burke, Archie Graham, Trevor Kubatzke, and Adam Strozier

B. COMPLIANCE WITH OPEN MEETINGS LAW:

The Legislative Task Force meeting was noticed in compliance with the Wisconsin Open Meetings law.

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF August 23, 2013 MEETING:

Ms. Nicolai moved, and Ms. Baker seconded, that the minutes be approved. The Task Force concurred.

D. DISCUSSION ITEMS:

1. Legislative Update:

a. Federal:

2014 Federal Budget
The House and Senate continue to be divided on a new federal budget bill. A Continuing Resolution (CR) will likely keep the government operating at the 2013 funding levels when the new federal fiscal year begins October 1.
DOE Gainful Employment Rule
T. Elverman noted that a Department of Education (DOE) panel met for three days in September and a second panel will convene from October 21 to 23 to discuss DOE draft “gainful employment” rules for colleges and universities that were published by the Department in August. After the second panel meets, the DOE plans to publish final rules that would be effective for the 2014-15 academic year.

Higher Education Reform Proposals from President Obama
President Obama continues to speak about his “college affordability reform initiative,” which is aimed at tackling the rising cost of college, making college more affordable, and improving the value of college for students. The Task Force remains concerned that the proposals President Obama is making could actually jeopardize some colleges and students that he is trying to help. Mr. Elverman reported that since the August Task Force Committee meeting he had discussed MATC’s concerns with Congresswoman Gwen Moore and her Chief of Staff in Wisconsin, Shirley Ellis, and they understood the college’s concerns. Mr. Elverman plans to speak to Senator Tammy Baldwin and her staff in the near future.

b. State:

Other State Legislation
T. Elverman distributed the updated document entitled “State Legislation That Could Affect MATC” and highlighted several recently introduced pieces of legislation, as well as action taken in recent weeks on bills discussed previously by the Task Force.

Changes Affecting Governance and Funding for the Wisconsin Technical College System (AB 177)
This legislation (discussed previously by the Task Force) would transfer all Technical College district facilities and assets to the Wisconsin Technical College System Board on July 1, 2015 and also prohibit local Tech College district boards from levying property taxes. It would also increase the state’s sales tax by one cent on January 1, 2015 to help pay the costs of operating the Technical Colleges. MATC and the District Boards Association continue to prepare and strategize in anticipation of a public hearing being held on this bill. Two public hearing dates that had been announced in August were both cancelled because of conflicts.

Instructional Programs for Nurse Aides (SB 212, AB 249)
These companion bills would permit the Department of Health Services (DHS) to approve instructional programs for nurse aides that include instructional programs offered in another state if that instruction is substantially the same required under current Wisconsin law. T. Elverman reported that he attended a public hearing on SB 212 on 9/18/13 and registered MATC in favor of this legislation.
Changes to Barbering and Cosmetology Regulations (SB 237)
This bill would make several changes to laws and regulations governing barbering and cosmetology in Wisconsin. The Task Force noted that Sen. Grothman had authored legislation during the last legislative session that also changed the regulations regarding barbering and cosmetology, and MATC and the other Tech Colleges have just finished updating their instructional programs to comply with those previous changes. MATC continues to educate several legislators on the concerns the college has regarding this piece of legislation. This bill had a public hearing on 9/18/13 which T. Elverman attended.

Requiring the Department of Revenue to Re-determine the Value of Tax Base of Tax Incremental Districts (TID’s) (AB 289)
This bill would allow a city or village to adopt a resolution requiring the DOR to re-determine the tax incremental base of a TID which is in a decrement (value decreasing) situation that has continued for at least two consecutive years. Decrement is defined as being at least 10 percent less than the current value of the TID’s tax incremental base. The Task Force members noted that this legislation would probably affect other Tech College districts in the state but not MATC because of our current levy situation and already-low property values.

Eligible Applicants Under the Broadband Expansion Grant (AB 307)
The Public Service Commission (PSC) makes grants to eligible applicants for constructing broadband in underserved areas of the state designated by the PSC. Under this bill, a school district, technical college district, or public library board that submits an application in partnership with an organization or telecommunications utility is also an eligible applicant. The Task Force members noted that this legislation would likely not impact MATC or its service area since southeastern Wisconsin is not an “underserved area of the state”. The Task Force asked T. Elverman and J. Bauknecht to continue to monitor this legislation.

c. Local:

J. Falkenberg reported that WTCS officials have approved MATC’s lease for facilities formerly occupied by Everest College. The college is moving forward with occupying the building as well as making arrangements for signage to be placed on the building.

The Committee briefly discussed a summary, prepared by J. Falkenberg, of advocacy initiatives the college can pursue to better educate elected officials regarding MATC’s partnerships with local businesses and overall effectiveness in workforce training.
Meeting Dates – FY2013-14

The Task Force will meet the following dates at 12:00 p.m. in the Board Room (M210):

- October 17, 2013
- November 21, 2013
- December 12, 2013
- January 23, 2014
- February 20, 2014
- March 20, 2014
- April 10, 2014
- May 22, 2014
- June 19, 2014

E. ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 1:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Desma P. Madison